

1520 Garden Street

Designation Status: Eligible for designation as a Structure of Merit

This report summarizes the findings of the Historic Structures/Sites Report prepared by Post/Hazeltine Associates, accepted by Historic Landmarks Commission with changes on October 30, 2019

Assessor Parcel Number: 027-251-021

Constructed: 1875

Period of Significance: 1874-1892

Historic Name: Fisher Residence

Property Description: A story-and-a-half Gothic Revival Style building set on a raised post-and-pier foundation capped by a steeply-pitched complex center-gabled roof with boxed eaves embellished with molding and trimwork on the front-facing bay window. Exterior walls are sheathed in wood shingles. Fenestration is composed of narrow two-over-two wood sash windows with a vertical emphasis, and the trimwork is primarily composed of reductive rectangular board on the windows. Elaborate bracketed and scrolled chamfered posts support a side porch with a glazed front door features elaborate paneling.

Architect: Unknown

Builder: Jacob Holmes

Architectural Style: Gothic Revival

Property Type: Single Family Residence

Original Use: Single Family Residence



Significance: The Historic Landmarks Commission listed the property on the Potential Historic Resources List since 1986 when the State of California Office of Historic Preservation determined the building was eligible as Structure of Merit. The City of Santa Barbara establishes historical significance as provided by the Municipal Code, Section 22.22.040. The Historic Structures/Sites Report accepted by the Historic Landmarks Commission on October 30, 2019 found the building qualifies as a Structure of Merit per the following criteria:

Criterion A. Its character, interest, or value as a significant part of the heritage of the City, the State, or the Nation:

The Gothic Revival Style was popular in America between circa-1840 and 1880. Drawing its inspiration from the Gothic architecture of 12th to 15th century Europe and Britain, the style originated in mid-18th century United Kingdom. While the Gothic Revival style in United States drew from Britain's Gothic Revival style, one of the divergent features of the American interpretation of this style was the predominate use of wood construction for both residential buildings and modestly scaled churches. Significant proponents of the Gothic Revival style in the United States included Andrew Jackson Downing and Alexander Davis. Very few Gothic Revival style houses dating before circa 1880 survive in the City. Among these are 710 Anacapa Street. While it has been altered, the house retains many of its original design features in good condition which allows it to convey the essential features of its Carpenter Gothic style design which was characterized by vertical massing, trimwork and steeply-pitched side and front gable roof. As an excellent example of the Gothic Revival style, the building qualifies under Criterion A.

Criterion D. Its exemplification of a particular architectural style or way of life important to the City, the State or the Nation:

The Gothic Revival style houses enjoyed their greatest popularity in Santa Barbara during the 1860s through mid-1870s, a period when milled lumber was first available in sufficient quantities to allow for widespread residential construction. Embodying simple architectural forms and minimal architectural detailing the style allowed trained carpenters such as Jacob T. Holmes, who designed the house at 1520 Garden Street, to achieve convincing essays in the style through the application of designs and motifs available in pattern books. This structure may qualify under Criterion D due to the following character-defining features:

- **Massing and Roof Details:** Central front gable balanced symmetrically on either side by side-gabled roofs.
- **Porch:** One-story entry porch.
- **Window Details:** Tall, narrow two-over wood sash windows.
- **Wall Details:** Wall surfaces often extended into the gable without a break, sheathed in either horizontal wood drop lap siding. There is evidence of the drop lap siding in the enclosed porch and it is likely under the shingle siding.



Criterion E. Its exemplification of the best remaining architectural type in a neighborhood:

The house at 1520 Garden Street, even in its altered state, is one of the few Gothic Revival style houses surviving in the Upper East neighborhood, with the only other surviving example located at 1732 Anacapa Street. Therefore, the house at 1520 Garden Street which is a rare surviving example of its 19th century architectural type in the Upper East neighborhood, is eligible for listing as a City of Santa Structure of Merit under Criterion e.

Criterion G. Its embodiment of elements demonstrating outstanding attention to architectural design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship:

The building demonstrates the following Gothic style character-defining design features:

- **Massing and Roof Details:** Central front gable balanced symmetrically on either side by side-gabled roofs or the asymmetrical type on the L-shaped structure.
- **Porch and Columns:** One-story entry porch.
- **Window Details:** Tall, narrow two-over wood sash windows with rectangular surrounds
- **Wall Details:** Wall surfaces often extended into the gable without a break, sheathed in either horizontal wood drop lap siding, some preserved under the shingle siding.

Criterion I. Its unique location or singular physical characteristic representing an established and familiar visual feature of a neighborhood:

Located mid-block of the 1500 block of Garden Street the house, which has been in place for at least 145 years, is the one of only two houses on the 1500 block of Garden Street that have been in-place for over 140 years. Therefore, the house at 1520 Garden Street is eligible for listing as a City of Santa Barbara Structure of Merit under Criterion I.



Historic Integrity:

The house at 1520 Garden Street has undergone several alterations since its construction in c. 1875, including covering the exterior drop lap siding with wood shingles in the early 1900s, the rebuilding of the street facades original entrance porch and enclosure of the other front porch on the front elevation. The owners added two additions, one prior to 1892 and one in 1922. The house preserves many character-defining elements of its Gothic Revival style with its cruciform main massing, steeply pitched gable roofs, almost all the original windows, trimwork, paneled doors hardware and drop siding. The house retains integrity of location, design, materials, workmanship, and feeling.

Work Cited:

Post/Hazeltine Associates. *Phase 1 Historic Sites/Structures Report*. Accepted by Historic Landmarks Commission, October 30, 2019. City of Santa Barbara Community Development records.

